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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BRIEFING PAPER

NORMALIZATION

The Problem

The issue of normalization of US/PRC relations -- looking toward the eventual establishment of diplomatic ties, and resolving our differences with Peking on the Taiwan question -- will be one of the more delicate questions you will have to deal with during your discussions in Peking.

The Chinese clearly understand that your visit has been arranged without preconditions as to topics discussed or outcome; and they have repeatedly stated that you can talk or not talk about the Taiwan issue, and that it is all right if there is no meeting of minds. Thus, they are unlikely to press you on questions related to normalization, particularly as they know that you are not prepared to reach a settlement at this time. They would not want either a rebuff or to create a formal deadlock which might prejudice the current relationship or the future resolution of the problem. Moreover, they do not wish to put themselves in the position of appearing to want something from the United States -- either recognition or Taiwan -- as this would undercut the bargaining posture they have adopted thus far (which is described in detail below).

At the same time, the Chinese will be intensely interested in the position you take on this matter, viewing it as an indication of how seriously the Administration views its relations with the PRC. Moreover, they may try to draw you into positions which will further constrain our flexibility in resolving the Taiwan issue at some time in the future -- which is one additional reason for care in handling the discussion.

While there is therefore no absolute requirement to raise this issue, we believe that you should not sidestep it for that would be taken by the Chinese as a lack of candor in the relationship. Rather, you should take the initiative and give a frank presentation describing how far we have come to date in meeting their concerns,

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and then seek to preserve your future bargaining leverage by indicating that you are prepared to address the question of full normalization in the future if we receive satisfactory assurances on various elements, including particularly that Taiwan's future relationship with the PRC will be resolved peacefully.

Background

As a basis for your handling this question in Peking, you should have a rather full sense of the historical development of our discussions with the Chinese on Taiwan and the normalization of US/PRC relations.

1970-72: Establishing a Framework for Normalization. As noted in the Scope Analysis for your visit, throughout the two decades of the 1950's and '60's, Peking took the position that there could be no improvement in US/PRC relations until we severed all official ties with the Government of the Republic of China and left Taiwan defenseless. This position changed only when Soviet military pressures and the threat of encirclement forced Peking to reorder its priorities. During the first meeting of the ambassadorial-level talks at Warsaw during the Nixon Administration -- in January 1970 -- both the Chinese and U.S. representatives hinted at the desirability of raising the desultory and unproductive talks to a more authoritative level, and in a secure environment. At the subsequent meeting in Warsaw on February 20, the Chinese representative stated without elaboration that "the PRC is aware that settlement of the Taiwan issue requires that an effort be made to create appropriate conditions for its resolution." This was Peking's first hint of some flexibility in handling the question.

During the first series of high-level exchanges with the Chinese, undertaken by Secretary Kissinger and President Nixon from the summer of 1971 through the President's trip in February, 1972 -- the two sides laid out in very general form their respective positions on resolution of the Taiwan issue as a basis for full normalization of relations. The Chinese position, which was incorporated into the Shanghai Communique, emphasized that:

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"The Taiwan question is the crucial question obstructing the normalization of relations between China and the United States; the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government of China; Taiwan is a province of China which has long been returned to the motherland; the liberation of Taiwan is China's internal affair in which no other country has the right to interfere; and all U.S. forces and military installations must be withdrawn from Taiwan."

The essence of the Chinese position was that if the United States wanted to establish diplomatic relations with Peking, we would have to break relations with the government in Taipei, recognize the PRC as the sole legal government of China and that Taiwan is part of China, and terminate our defense relationship with the island.

At the same time, the Chinese indicated that they would in fact "create conditions" for the eventual political resolution of our differences on the Taiwan question by agreeing to establish an on-going authoritative dialogue with the United States, and by facilitating the development of a positive "China mood" in the United States through cultural and scientific exchanges, and the development of trade. The Chinese, in effect, accepted President Nixon's view that some political "running room" was needed if the Administration was eventually to come to terms with Peking on this issue.

For our part, President Nixon's counterpoint to the PRC's conditions was expressed in five principles for normalization which he and Secretary Kissinger conveyed privately to the leadership in Peking:

1. The Administration accepted the principle of one China, and that Taiwan is a part of China. There would be no more statements from the United States to the effect that the status of Taiwan is undetermined (a position we had taken since the Korean War).

2. The United States would not support any Taiwan independence movement.

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3. The United States would use its influence to discourage Japan or other third countries from moving into Taiwan as the U.S. presence diminished.

4. The United States would support any peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue that might be worked out directly between the two Chinese parties; and we would not support any military actions by the government on Taiwan against the PRC. Moreover, the United States would progressively reduce its military presence on the island as progress was made toward a peaceful resolution of the differences between Taiwan and the PRC -- and as a negotiated solution of the Indochina conflicts reduced tensions in the Asian area.

5. The Administration would actively work toward the full normalization of US/PRC relations. President Nixon indicated to Premier Chou En-lai that he would seek to establish diplomatic relations by moving step-by-step to reduce US/PRC differences over the coming four years, completing the process during his anticipated second term of office.

In these early discussions, both Secretary Kissinger and President Nixon emphasized the desire of the Administration that the Taiwan issue would be resolved peacefully. Premier Chou waffled on this question. He said that it was also the hope of the PRC side that they could achieve a "peaceful liberation" of the island. Peking would strive for this type of outcome, but it required the cooperation of the other side. At the same time, Chou indicated that the Chinese side could not make a formal pledge to restrict their approach to this problem solely to peaceful means because this would constitute an infringement of the PRC's sovereignty by accepting foreign terms for dealing with an issue they consider to be solely an internal matter. Secretary Kissinger made the suggestion (first in October 1971), however, that the Chinese could make a unilateral statement of their intention to resolve the Taiwan issue peacefully. The United States could then take note of such a statement as the basis for fully normalizing with Peking. Publicly, the U.S. position in these early exchanges was summarized in one paragraph of the Shanghai Communiqué:

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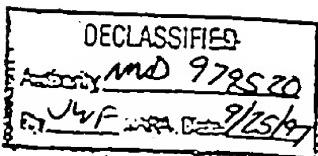
"The U.S. side declared: The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. With this prospect in mind, it affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations from Taiwan. In the meantime, it will progressively reduce its forces and military installations on Taiwan as tension in the area diminishes."

In effect, the U.S. position as embodied in the Shanghai Communique established the basic outlines for an eventual normalization agreement, but did so in a qualified manner. We indicated indirectly our movement toward a position of accepting Peking's one China condition by saying that the United States Government "does not challenge" the position of the two Chinese parties that Taiwan is a part of China. We expressed our intention to progressively diminish and ultimately to withdraw our entire military presence from the island, but we linked this to a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves.

/In actual practice, we have followed through on our unilateral commitment to reduce the American military presence on Taiwan. During President Nixon's visit to Peking in early 1972, there were approximately 10,000 American servicemen on the island, nuclear weapons, reconnaissance aircraft, and a large contingent of manpower, transport and refueling aircraft, and communications activity related to the Viet-Nam War and our regional defense role in East Asia. By the summer of 1974, the total manpower level on the island had been reduced to 5,500 and the nuclear weapons had been removed. All aircraft have now been removed.

At present our manpower level on Taiwan is something less than 2,800 men, or about one-fourth of what it was

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at the time of the signing of the Shanghai Communique. The personnel who remain are largely committed to liaison and planning work with the ROC, intelligence collection on PRC targets, and regional military communications. Further reductions in our remnant military presence on the island will require basic decisions affecting intelligence collection requirements and siting arrangements, new regional military communications facilities, and the future of our political relationships with both the ROC and PRC.⁷

The discussions between our two governments in 1971-72 revealed a strong common interest in adopting parallel action on international security issues. Because of this, Peking decided to initiate a gradual political process with us on the normalization question which would draw the United States into a positive relationship with the PRC over the next four years. Mao and Chou must have assumed that in his second term Mr. Nixon, as a lame duck President, would have enhanced flexibility in coping with Chinese terms for normalization. At the same time the Chinese probably calculated that they would more sharply define for the Administration their terms for full normalization as the official dialogue progressed. However, during President Nixon's visit to Peking the Chinese did not press for an immediate solution and left their terms vaguely defined.

In short, the Chinese decided to put our common interests in the international scene (i.e., the Soviet threat) ahead of Taiwan in their order of priorities when they resumed contact with us after two decades. They subsequently decided to finesse the Taiwan issue, while maintaining their principles regarding a resolution of the future of the island by including carefully constructed formulation in the Shanghai Communique.

In addition, the Chinese approached this four-year period after 1972 as a time when they would try to further isolate Taiwan and limit its future options by normalizing with other countries important to the survival of the

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Republic of China (such as Japan, Australia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia). All these states have now broken relations with Taipei and recognize Peking as the sole legal government of China. In effect, Peking has capitalized on the impact of our opening to them by replacing the ROC in the United Nations and establishing diplomatic relations with about 50 countries since July 1971.

1973-75: The Stalling of Effort to Accelerate the Normalization Process. After the termination of the direct American role in Viet-Nam, in January of 1973, Peking sought to accelerate the normalization process. During Secretary Kissinger's visit to China in February of that year, the Chinese agreed to open Liaison Offices in our respective capitals -- thus reversing themselves on the long-held position that as long as the Government of the Republic of China had an embassy in Washington they would not send their officials here. They did so, probably, with the expectation that this would be a brief transitional arrangement leading to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in three or four years at most (according to President Nixon's timetable and assurances).

In November of 1973, Chairman Mao held a long discussion with the Secretary during which he more explicitly defined Peking's terms for a settlement of the Taiwan question and establishment of diplomatic relations. The Chairman said that the United States should separate the question of Peking's relations with Taiwan from the question of Peking's relations with the United States. He said that he was prepared to wait 100 years for the return of the island to Chinese control, commenting that the Chiang Kai-shek government was a "bunch of counter-revolutionaries." Moreover, in an aside to former Foreign Minister Chi P'eng-fei -- present at the meeting as a silent observer -- Mao said that he personally did not believe that there could be a peaceful settlement of their differences with Taiwan.

At the same time, the Chairman said that he thought the establishment of diplomatic relations between the PRC and the United States need not take a hundred years. He said that "so long as you /the United States/ sever diplomatic relations with Taiwan, then it is possible for our

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two countries to solve the issue of diplomatic relations. That is to say, like we /the PRC/ did with Japan."

During this same visit to Peking, Premier Chou En-lai proposed to the Secretary a communique formulation on the issue of normalization that implied some measure of flexibility in Peking's terms. This formulation was made public on November 14, 1973:

"The Chinese side reiterated that the normalization of relations between China and the United States can be realized only on the basis of confirming the principle of one China."

In negotiating this language, the Premier did not spell out in any detail the manner in which the United States could "confirm the principle of one China."

During subsequent visits, the Chinese sought to narrow the Administration's room for maneuver. During the Secretary's November 1974 trip to Peking, Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping elaborated on the so-called Japanese model for normalization by emphasizing three principles. The United States must sever diplomatic relations and cease all official ties with the government of Taipei; we must withdraw all troops from the island; and we must abrogate the US/ROC defense treaty. He also indicated that the Chinese side could not accept the notion of transferring our liaison office from Peking to Taipei while moving our embassy from Taipei to Peking.

In reply, the Secretary indicated that we could accept Teng's three principles, and that while we would have to maintain some form of residual presence in Taipei its exact name or form did not appear to present insurmountable obstacles. He emphasized, however, that while the United States did not want to be a guaranteeing power over the future of Taiwan, we did want the solution of this problem to be peaceful. He again noted that the PRC side might make a unilateral statement of its intentions toward the island.

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Teng responded to this latter suggestion by saying that this was an issue he assumed the two sides would discuss in the future. At the same time, the Vice Premier rather self-righteously emphasized that the United States owes China a debt on the Taiwan issue; and that while from a moral and political point of view they had a right to demand an early solution, they were prepared to be "patient" if the United States still needed Taiwan. He indicated there could be no flexibility regarding the United States accepting his "three principles" for normalization, and scoffed at the value of further unilateral U.S. reductions in our troop presence on the island, as moves designed to maintain some momentum in the normalization process. The Vice Premier's remarks were undoubtedly designed for tactical effect, although they were also probably a reflection of his own frontal approach to problems, in contrast to the more subtle and indirect style of Premier Chou.

During the Secretary's most recent visit to Peking this past October, the Chinese once again stressed the importance of international issues as compared to the Taiwan question. Chairman Mao devoted almost all of his time to a review of the world scene and the respective roles of the Soviet Union and the United States. He did cover Taiwan, however, by again expressing great patience about the issue but also including some ambiguous remarks -- which might have been expressed with sardonic undertones -- about our now having Taiwan and this being a good thing for the time being.

The Chairman first referred to the subject of Taiwan by saying that "the small issue is Taiwan, the big issue is the world." After saying that the Soviet Union, Europe, and Japan all hold higher priorities for the United States than relations with China, he observed that we "now have the Taiwan of China." When Secretary Kissinger said that this issue would be settled between our two countries, the Chairman said "in a hundred years" (which he had said in 1973 as well). When Secretary Kissinger said it would not take that long, the Chairman replied: "It's better for it /the island/ to be in your hands. And if you were

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to send it back to me now, I would not want it because it's not wantable. There are a huge bunch of counter-revolutionaries there. A hundred years hence we will want it, and we are going to fight for it."

This last remark was probably the most explicit Chinese expression of the intention to use non-peaceful means to recover the island that we have heard in our talks.

When Secretary Kissinger again said that it would not take a hundred years to resolve the Taiwan question, the Chairman said:

"It is hard to say. Five years, ten, twenty, a hundred years. It's hard to say. And when I go to heaven to see God, I'll tell him it is better to have Taiwan under the care of the United States now."

At the same time, the Chinese sought to further constrict our room for maneuver on the Taiwan issue. In the draft communique which the Chinese tabled late at night on the last day of the Secretary's visit, the Chinese added phrases to the Shanghai Communique formulation on normalization which, as the Secretary told the Foreign Minister, sharpened the PRC position in a way which would further complicate the Administration's efforts to move to full normalization -- a policy objective which we had repeatedly stated we intend to carry out. Peking's draft included the new phrase, "The Chinese people are determined to liberate Taiwan, and when and how the Chinese people liberate Taiwan is entirely China's internal affair in which no country has the right to interfere."

In addition, this communique jettisoned Premier Chou's ambiguous formulation contained in the November 1973 communique about normalization on the basis of "confirming the principle of one China" and substituted the sharply worded phrase "the normalization of relations between China and the United States can be realized only when the United States Government severs its so-called

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diplomatic relations with the Taiwan 'regime,' withdraws all U.S. armed forces and military installations from Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait area, and abrogates the US/Chiang 'joint defense treaty'."

As well, in our various exchanges with Peking over the last month, Chinese authorities have scoffed at our view that signs of visible progress in our bilateral relations -- in the areas of trade and exchanges -- would help sustain and build support in the United States for further steps toward the full normalization of US/PRC relations. In a statement of November 4 they stated sharply that they assume the Administration will take whatever actions necessary to normalize relations, or to cooperate with China on international issues, on the basis of our own assessment of America's national interests, and not because of Peking's willingness (or unwillingness) to accommodate our concerns that your trip convey some sense of partial progress in our relationship.

If we were to summarize Peking's current orientation to the normalization issue, it is that they realize that the momentum which they sought to establish by agreeing to establish Liaison Offices in 1973 has now dissipated because of our domestic and international political requirements which make this an inopportune time to complete the process. The Chinese are unhappy about this, but they continue to say that international issues come first in our relationship, with the Taiwan question remaining in second place. They are not, and never have been, willing to break with us on this bilateral question because it would expose them to heightened Soviet pressures. At the same time, it is certainly true that the Taiwan question remains an issue of major principle to Peking, and a question of considerable emotional weight and domestic importance.

Our evaluation of the way Peking is currently treating this issue is that they are constrained, in part by domestic political consideration, from showing signs of progress in our bilateral relations without significant steps on our part to resolve the Taiwan question. Moreover, they no doubt want to put us under psychological

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pressure by maneuvering us into a position where we want the relationship with them more than they with us. This presumably will limit their own vulnerability on the Taiwan question (which they also try to do by stating, somewhat disingenuously, that they can wait a hundred years for it) and by making us appear to be the supplicant in the relationship. As we note in the scope analysis, however, this situation has changed somewhat now that Peking has agreed to go ahead with your visit despite our differences over a communique and the cool exchanges we have had in recent weeks. At the same time, the Chinese are also trying to narrow our range of options on a future normalization agreement by sharpening their terms.

If There Were a Normalization Agreement...

The above analysis describes the evolution of our exchanges with Peking on the normalization issue since 1970, and the current status of these discussions. Each side clearly understands the terms the other side has established for further progress. In our case, the heavy stress we have placed on peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question does not mean that we have any great fear of an early PRC assault against Taiwan once our defense treaty were abrogated in the process of establishing full relations with Peking. But we would be concerned over the political and psychological consequences in Taiwan, here in the United States, and among many of our allies; and the package settlement would have to be designed to offset these potential difficulties.

The Chinese know that we are not prepared to complete the normalization process at this time. If we were at such a point, however, the likely outlines of the solution might include the following:

- Some form of non-binding, unilateral public statement by Peking expressing patience on the Taiwan issue and the intention that the island's eventual "liberation" will be peaceful.

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- A public US/PRC communique announcing establishment of diplomatic relations in which we take note of Peking's statement that Taiwan's future relationship with China will be resolved peacefully, and perhaps expressing the view that if this issue is not handled peacefully we will have to reassess our relationship with the PRC.
- Peking's private agreement to some form of residual semi-official presence by U.S. personnel in Taipei to sustain our contact with the authorities on the island, but a withdrawal of our legal recognition of the Government of the Republic of China.
- Peking's agreement that American citizens will continue to have unimpeded access to Taiwan for social and commercial purposes.
- A public statement of some sort by U.S. officials acknowledging that the US/ROC Mutual Defense Treaty is no longer in force, coupled with a private understanding with Peking that we will continue to sell defensive military equipment to the island on a cash basis, at least for a certain period of time.
- Perhaps a Congressional resolution expressing the continuing concern of the United States for the security and well-being of the people of Taiwan as a basis for maintaining good relations with the People's Republic of China.

This is our conception of a package agreement on normalization which might bridge our political requirements with those of the PRC. We do not know whether such a deal would be acceptable to Peking, however, as we have not yet explored several sensitive aspects of such an arrangement in our discussions. This residual ambiguity in our respective positions is important in the absence of an effort to reach a final settlement for

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it preserves some marginal room for maneuver and avoids locking either side into a position from which it would be difficult to move. In any event, you will not want to get into bargaining on this issue during your trip.

The Objectives of Your Talks on the Normalization Issue

You have two key objectives for your talks in Peking on the normalization issue: to reaffirm the intention of the Administration to complete the normalization of US/PRC relations "in a measurable period of time" (Secretary Kissinger's phrase during his October visit to Peking); yet to preserve our negotiating room for maneuver by emphasizing our concern that the Taiwan issue be resolved peacefully, and the need for mutual efforts to make further progress on this issue (in contrast to Peking's view that we owe them a "debt" and that it is up to the United States to meet the PRC's terms).

We believe you should emphasize the following points in your discussions:

- We understand that the Taiwan issue remains the primary question obstructing full normalization. The Administration fully intends to seek to complete the process in a measurable period of time. We take this issue seriously because we believe the consolidation of US/PRC relations is important to the interests of both sides.
- We have no illusions about the difficulty for both sides of taking the final step. It requires bridging an issue which affects the sovereignty of the PRC with the integrity of our commitments to other countries, a principle in which Peking should have an interest as well. We know these are principles of profound concern to both sides. We have no interest in compromising the sovereignty of China. It has long been a basic element of U.S. policy to support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China, and we have never supported the idea of Taiwan's independence.

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At the same time, it has been security issues which brought the United States and the PRC together, and we don't intend to normalize in such a manner that we downgrade the integrity of our commitments in the eyes of such important allies as Japan or the Western European countries; nor do we want to do it in a way that produces a domestic reaction which would make it very difficult to sustain a constructive relationship between our two countries.

- Each side clearly understands the views the other has put forward over the past four years on the question of normalization. We reaffirm the five principles that President Nixon expressed during his visit in 1972, as well as the fact that we basically accept the three principles the PRC side characterizes as the "Japanese model" for normalization. For the United States, the basic issue remains the question of the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question.
- We appreciate the patience which the Chinese side has shown on this issue. We don't "need" Taiwan in any strategic or economic sense; we require the right overall political context and understandings with the PRC to make the final move. Frankly, we believe the way we have proceeded on this issue has been of benefit to both sides. While Taiwan's formal ties with the rest of the world have eroded over the past four years, the island has not been driven into rash actions -- declaring its independence from China, or seeking the protection of others -- which would present both the United States and the PRC with very difficult problems.
- In the coming year we intend to make further reductions in our now-residual military presence on the island. These will indicate the continuing direction of our policy.

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- We understand from Secretary Kissinger's recent exchanges with the PRC that the Chinese side is not prepared to take further partial steps toward improvement of relations at this time. We put forward as a serious suggestion in our draft communique submitted in October language expressing direct support for the principle of one China. We believe this would have clearly indicated our continuing commitment to the normalization process, and would have moved us measurably closer to that goal.
- We also believe that signs of vitality in our bilateral relations, through growing cultural and scientific exchanges and the development of trade, are useful symbolic ways of bringing the American people along toward the notion of full normalization, and creating a base of support in the United States for more active parallel actions with the PRC on security issues which are of common concern. We are quite prepared to proceed on the basis of the relationship ~~st~~-tained at its present level, although we frankly do not think this serves Peking's own interests.

Department of State
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